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USSN 10/522,459

ATTY. DOCKET NO. VAJP-40008

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Complete Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment including:
 - an inner layer,
 - an outer layer,
 - a plurality of resilient panels of arcuate cross-section housed between the inner layer and the outer layer of the garment, each of the plurality of resilient panels arranged to overlap and slide relative to at least one adjacent panel of the plurality of resilient panels to spread and/or absorb energy upon impact; and
 - a plurality of channels or pockets between the inner layer and the outer layer, each of the plurality of channels housing one or more of the plurality of resilient panels which are freely movable in the channels or pockets.
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Currently amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 1 wherein each channel or pocket is arranged to house one column of said plurality of arcuate in cross-section panels.
4. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 1 wherein in cross-section shape each panel ~~or~~ pockets of said plurality of panels includes two lower side portions and a higher middle portion.
5. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 4 wherein the plurality of panels are arranged so that one side portion of a first panel is adjacent to ~~the~~ a middle portion of a second panel and a side portion of the second panel is adjacent ~~the~~ a middle portion of a third panel.

6. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 4 wherein the plurality of panels are arranged in a symmetrical pattern with the axis of symmetry running between the center of the front of the garment and the center of the back of the garment.
7. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 6 wherein;
- a center panel of the plurality of panels with a higher middle portion and lower side portions is situated between a first left side panel and a first right side panel of the plurality of panels.
 - both the first left side panel and the first right side panel have one side portion adjacent ~~the~~ a middle portion of the ~~centre~~ center panel,
 - a second left side panel has one side portion adjacent the middle of the first left side panel, and
 - a second right side panel has one side portion adjacent the middle of the first right side ~~panels~~ panel.
8. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 1 wherein the cross-section of each panel of the plurality of panels extends between a first side portion and a second side portion and includes a higher portion and a lower middle portion.
9. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 8 wherein;
- the plurality of panels are arranged so that ~~the~~ a lower middle portion of a first panel is adjacent a first side portion of a second panel,
 - ~~the~~ a second side portion of the first panel is adjacent to the an upper middle portion of the second panel,
 - ~~the~~ a lower middle portion of the second panel is adjacent to ~~the~~ a first side portion of a third panel, and

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~~the~~ a second side portion of the second panel is adjacent to the an upper middle portion of the third panel.

10. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 1 wherein the plurality of panels are arranged in a sliding relationship using a rivets and slots.

11. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 10 wherein ~~at each point where panels are adjacent~~ at least one panel is provided with a slot and the panels are riveted with the rivet arranged to slide along the slot thereby allowing a sliding relationship between adjacent panels.

12. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 1 wherein the panels are arranged to form rows across the garment with each one of the panels in the row being housed in a channel or connected to the adjacent panel(s) by a suitable sliding connection means.

13. (Previously Presented) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 1 wherein the garment is provided with more than one row of panels where the panels form columns in each channel.

14. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 13 wherein the garment is provided with an overlap between the plurality of panels in each channel or pocket.

15. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 1 wherein the plurality of panels are formed from resilient deformable material.

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16. (Original) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 15 wherein the panels are formed from plastics.
17. (Previously Presented) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 15 wherein the panels are formed from a rigid material.
18. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 15 wherein the plurality of panels are formed from PVC.
19. (Previously Presented) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 15 wherein the plurality of panels are formed from metal.
20. (Currently Amended) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 15 wherein, after ~~a panel~~ one of said panels of said plurality of panels has received an impact of greater than a predetermined force, it permanently deforms.
21. (Previously Presented) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 1 wherein the garment is provided with perforations to allow air to flow through the garment to a wearer.
22. (Previously Presented) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 1 wherein the garment is provided with perforations to allow air to flow through the garment to a wearer.
23. (Original) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 22 wherein the fabric of the inner and outer layers includes one-way stretchability.
24. (Original) An energy absorbing and/or spreading garment as claimed in claim 23 wherein the stretchability is arranged to run across the garment.